

THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING ENLISTS FOR THE WAR

How the Departments of the City Administration Will Co-operate With the Federal Forces and Authorities in Safeguarding New York and Organizing Its Defences

FATHER KNICKERBOCKER is working hand in hand with Uncle Sam in preparing for war. As the metropolis of the United States, New York undoubtedly has looked further ahead than any other city in this country with a view to anticipating the crisis that is now upon us. The mobilizing and utilizing of the municipal forces and resources will form an important factor in war. The Tribune Magazine already has presented details of the preparations of the Police Department, and it has explained how the United States Secret Service is co-operating with the police in detecting espionage and plots, how the police have been drilled in military work, becoming expert in the use of machine guns, and how every man has been assigned to his post and thoroughly understands what he is to do in the event of war emergencies.

Thousands of Trained Men Ready for Special Service

But there are other departments of the city that may prove to be of the greatest service, working in conjunction with the United States authorities. There are many thousands of men in the employ of the city, already trained in their special lines, who will be of inestimable help to the Federal government. The layman, for instance, would not consider the Tenement House Department in terms of militarism. Nor would he be likely to draw parallels between the Municipal Civil Service Commission and the War Department. As for the Department of Corrections—he would probably think that branch of the city government far removed from the activities of Mars.

Yet these departments, with others, have their place, and that place is well defined in a comprehensive general plan. The proposition to have the city departments work in perfect accord with the national government has been enthusiastically received by the heads of the various municipal branches. In many instances extensive preparations have been making for months, and in other instances plans recently proposed soon will be under way.

Municipal Employees to Drill in City Hall Park

In addition to the expert and technical services which members of the various city staffs can render to the Federal Government, plans are making to furnish actual recruits to the army, trained and ready to take their places when the call comes for them. A proposition is now before the Mayor to grant leaves of absence twice a week, after 3:30 o'clock in the afternoon, to city employees that they may go to Governor's Island and be drilled by a sergeant of the United States army. When they get beyond the "awkward squad" stage it is proposed to have them drill in a body certain afternoons in the City Hall Park, so that they will serve as an object lesson and incentive to other young men to enlist.

Teamwork Prevails in Developing the Mayor's Programme

One of the city officials who is active in the work of municipal preparedness is Leonard M. Wallstein, Commissioner of Accounts, who is brought in close touch with all the departments and is in a position to know the extent to which each might contribute in a war sense. Mr. Wallstein, because of his official position, is in intimate touch with the policy of the Mayor and in a great measure represents him in the co-operation of the various branches of the city government. The Commissioner has had considerable to do in helping shape the programme for war preparedness in the different municipal departments so that all will be ready for effective teamwork. In view of this fact, therefore, what he has to say on this subject is authoritative.

"Now that war is upon us, each branch of the government of the metropolis has a double duty," he said the other day in discussing the matter. "Routine administration on the civil

side must proceed in proper order. In addition, the extraordinary duties incident to the government of a cosmopolitan community in time of war must be discharged.

"By direction of the Mayor each department of the local government for months has been preparing itself to discharge its duty in both aspects, and today the government of the City of New York is ready. Even in normal times the duties of many city officials and employees are exacting. In this crisis, however, all of them stand ready to give the best that is in them by way of contribution to the cause that has at length brought us into this world-wide war. The President's magnificent statement of humanity's grievances against the German government, in his recent address to Congress, has inspired everybody connected with the government of the City of New York to make a demonstration, not merely of sentimental patriotism, but of practical action. In all branches of the city government the Mayor's example has inspired an eager desire to do more than the routine duties of the day. And in every department the governmental forces, from the head of the department down, are bending their best efforts to be of service.

First and Foremost Come the Police and Fire Departments

"Universal military service is bound to come. The American people will be content, now that war is here, to wage nothing less than the most effective war they can. I am certain that the employees of the City of New York stand ready to do their part in preparing for actual military service. I hope that before very long they will be given the opportunity which private concerns have already afforded their employees. I refer to the drilling and military training instruction now being given on Governor's Island. Let the word be given, and the rank and file of the city departments will convert themselves into an effective military unit, ready and eager to render any service."

For actual training and efficient service in a city exposed as New York is exposed at the present time, the two most important departments are Police and Fire. Both of these branches of the city's working forces, highly trained at all times, for many months have been under special courses of instruction to meet the war situation and all the emergencies that go with war.

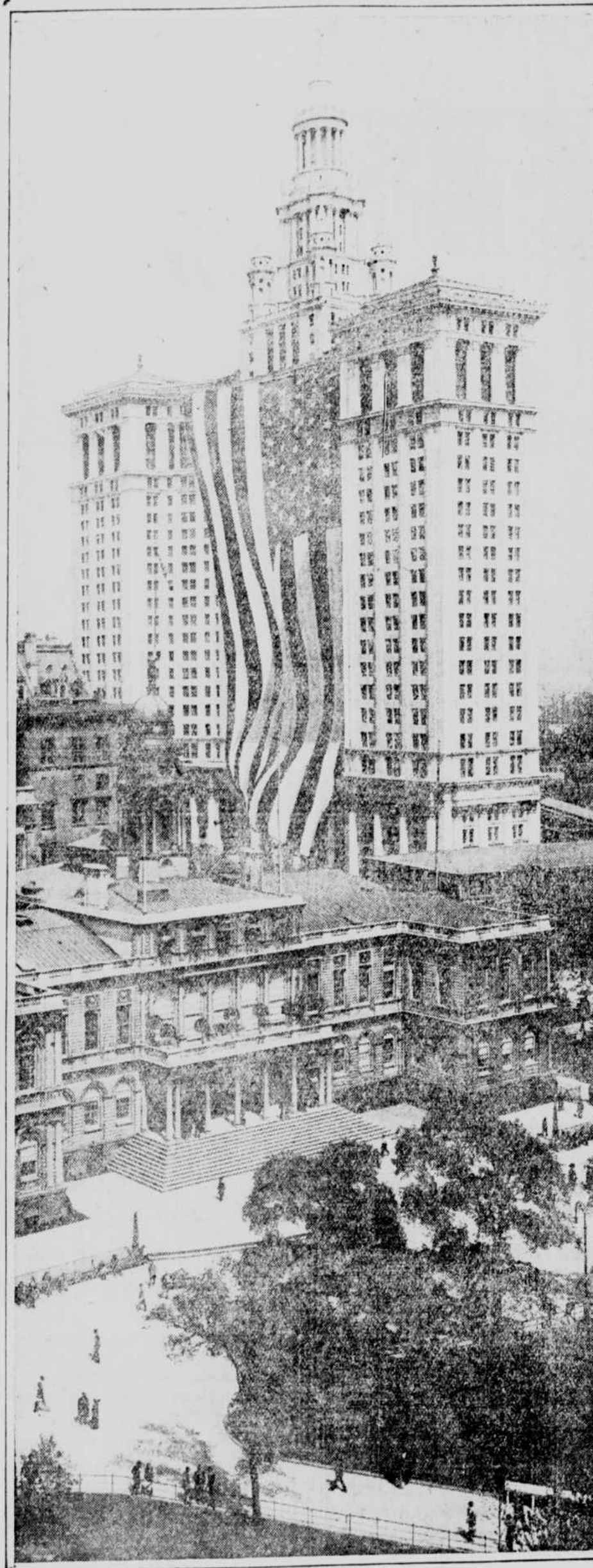
The Fire Department, with its 5,000 experienced men, matches the Police Department in importance of action at this particular period. In addition to the regular firemen an auxiliary force of 1,500 is waiting orders, ready to appear for duty at a moment's call.

Fire Department Has Enlisted Large Emergency Force

The Fire Commissioner, Robert Adamson, is thoroughly alive to the necessity of having the men conversant with the extra-hazardous duties that may be required of them. He has gone quietly and systematically to work arranging all the details that the present menace demands, and he has seen to it personally that every man in the department dovetails into the general plan.

"We feel," said he, in talking with the writer, "if there is any trouble arising out of the war that the Fire Department would have to bear the brunt of it. We cannot, like other departments, avail ourselves of the services of any citizen who may volunteer to help us, because fire fighting requires trained men.

"We have enlisted a very large emergency force for war service, if the force should be needed. This force consists of retired members of the Fire Department who are still physically able to do fire duty; members of former volunteer fire companies in Brooklyn, Queens and Richmond, and members of active volunteer companies, and young men who are on the eligible list for appointment as firemen. The only men who are without previous actual experience in fire fighting are the men on this eligible list.



Father Knickerbocker Shows His Colors

"Every man who has enlisted in this service has signed an enrolment blank, which shows his home address, the telephone by which he can be reached, either night or day; his present occupation, his age and his previous experience in fire fighting. In this force a large number of officers of many years' experience in the department have been enlisted, including several chiefs. Former Battalion Chief Guerin, who was at one time Deputy Chief of the Fire Prevention Bureau, was one of the first to enlist. The son of Chief Croker is among the young volunteers from Queens. We have thus secured a very large, enthusiastic and trained force which can be brought into service at an hour's notice. All the enrolment blanks have been classified by battalion and company districts, by telephone centrals, and all the men have been assigned to companies where they may be used when needed."

"What is the plan for the use of the men?" the Commissioner was asked.

"In case of a serious emergency," he replied, "the regular force of firemen will be concentrated in the central part of the city, where the fire danger is greatest, and the volunteers will be used to man the companies in the outlying districts, where fires are very few and

where the possibility of incendiarism would be remote. If the situation should warrant it, we would install a number of extra companies in the central part of the city, using spare apparatus for that purpose. All these volunteers have agreed to serve without pay, and have shown an eager disposition to give the city the benefit of their experience as firemen. We have enough men on the volunteer rolls to man practically every fire company in the city, if necessary.

"Another emergency measure which we have taken," continued Commissioner Adamson, "is to organize an auxiliary fleet of fireboats for service on the waterfront, because of the very large shipments of munitions and supplies to Europe and because of the wooden construction of the piers. This is the only place where Chief Kenlon tears a conflagration.

"Last year we had our greatest increase in fires along the waterfront. There was an increase of forty-four in the number of ship fires and a large increase in the number of fires on piers. The biggest fire we had was the burning of the Munitions Pier, at the foot of Pioneer Street, Brooklyn.

"We have enlisted in this auxiliary fleet 143 powerful tugboats owned by

Each Department Has Its Task, in Proportion to Its Opportunity for Service—Especially Well Prepared for Emergencies Is the Fire Department—Drills for City Employees

all the railroads entering New York City, Jersey City and Hoboken, as well as tugboats of the Standard Oil Company, Bush Terminal Company and the Jay Street Terminal Company. These boats are all equipped for fire fighting, their officers have been instructed in practical fire extinguishment and they now respond to alarms of fire.

"The waterfront has been divided into ten zones, to each of which certain fire-fighting tugboats within those zones are assigned. The tug dispatcher in charge of these boats is notified at once when a fire occurs in a zone. These boats all have done splendid duty at fires, and in case of war emergency would be invaluable. As we have only ten fireboats in the regular service of the Fire Department, it can be seen what a large addition to our available force these boats will represent."

"What have you been doing in regard to explosives?"

Strict Regulation in the Sale and Storage of Explosives

"We took up several months ago the matter of a stricter regulation and control of the handling of explosives in the city. One step taken was the reduction of the number of dynamite magazines along the route of the subway. The number of these magazines was cut down one-half, and the contractors were all required to put on a double force of watchmen. The strictest kind of regulations are imposed in the matter of the sale of dynamite and other high explosives.

"We have also taken up the matter of regulating the purchase of chemicals which might be used in manufacturing explosives. We have a number of able chemists who have been working with us in this matter, and steps have been taken to prevent the sale of dangerous chemicals to any irresponsible person.

"Then we have worked out, in conjunction with the Police Department, a plan of co-operation by the Fire Department in cases of rioting in the streets. A riot call has been introduced in the department, and if a riot should break out the police have been instructed how to transmit a riot call through the fire alarm telegraph system. The effectiveness of a stream from a fire engine, and especially in the high pressure district, in quieting a riot is apparent."

What the Tenement House Department Plans to Accomplish

Commissioner John J. Murphy, in charge of the Tenement House Department, has 564 employees, among whom ninety are women. Fully 450 men are available for military service in one form or another. The 207 tenement house inspectors can be especially useful in safeguarding the population in congested districts. The work of the tenement house inspectors daily takes them into these districts, and they come in close contact with all sorts of people. They have the confidence of the people with whom they are acquainted and have opportunities for learning what is going on in their respective localities. They hear things that outsiders would not hear. If strangers come into the districts the inspectors can ascertain what the newcomers are doing. The inspectors are perfectly familiar with the buildings and the landmarks and are in a position to furnish much useful information as to the character of the surroundings.

There are numerous ways in which the Department of Water Supply, Gas and Electricity can be of service in a military sense. There are 2,750 employees in the department, and many of these men can help the military forces. The urgent necessity of guarding the water supply of the city is evident when one considers that since April 1 all the water for the city has come from the Catskills, from the Croton and Byram watersheds, and no water is now pumped from the ground in Brooklyn, Queens or Richmond. The Ashokan reservoir, at the foot of the Catskills, alone has a capacity of 128,000,000 gallons, and is located ninety-two miles from the city. The Croton and Byram

watersheds have a daily capacity of 425,000,000 gallons, and the new Catskill aqueduct has a daily capacity of 350,000,000, making a total of 775,000,000 gallons.

Vitality Important Is the Work of the Water Department

To protect this vast water supply from injury is one of the most important duties that will devolve upon the military forces. To relieve from this task the men of the National Guard and the police, whose services may be needed elsewhere, is one of the duties that may be performed, in part at least, by the Water Department. In time of peace the water supply system has been guarded by fifty uniformed men patrolling the reservoir district. In time of war this number must be greatly augmented. It is toward this end that efforts will be made to mobilize the forces of the department.

The Department of Docks and Ferries, in charge of Commissioner R. A. C. Smith, which ranks among the first of the big branches of the city government, is now well prepared to help the Federal government. Some time ago Mayor Mitchell wrote to President Wilson tendering the use of all the city wharves and docks to the United States. The President wrote to the Mayor thanking him and stating that the Federal government would be pleased to accept the offer in the event of war. The war has come and the docks and wharves are at the disposal of the nation.

City Docks Placed at the Federal Government's Disposal

The Commissioner of Docks and Ferries has control of all the wharves and water frontage of the city, and the important part that his domain will play during the present situation is apparent. There are nine ferryboats which can be used for transfer purposes, three tugboats, five steam launches, seven gasoline motor launches, twenty deck scows and twenty-two yawl boats, all of which can be used in conveying supplies and for patrol duty.

The duties of the Department of Plant and Structures, under Commissioner Frederick J. H. Kracke, already have been defined in former articles, so far as the bridges are concerned, but there is one of the branches of this department that will have an important bearing on the war. That is the municipal garage located in Concord Street, Brooklyn, near the Brooklyn Bridge. There are fourteen departments of the city government that use this garage, and there are seventy-two cars stored there, and forty-three chauffeurs make their headquarters there. It has been proposed to enlarge this structure and make it the central garage for the military during the war. Many private cars will be donated to the Federal government and others can be commandeered, so the necessity for a large garage conveniently located to all points in Manhattan and Long Island is obvious.

Additional Duties and Opportunities of the Department of Health

Of course, the Department of Health naturally would suggest itself as a very necessary auxiliary to any military movement. First of all, the sanitary condition and the health of the city are demanded under all circumstances, either in peace or in war. In war time extra precautions must be taken to guard the health of civilians and soldiers.

Under Dr. Haven Emerson, the Commissioner, a state of preparedness has existed in the department for many months. A supply of antitoxin has been furnished to the Allies for some time. A provision of the law permits the department to sell vaccine and antitoxin not needed for use in the city if the proceeds are devoted to the needs of the department. Since the war France and

Continued on Page Eight